Modern Jewellery
1890 - 1961

International Exhibition

The world's first major international exhibition of modern jewellery will be held in October and November 1961 in the City of London at Goldsmiths' Hall. For eight centuries this has been the home of the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths, a mediaeval guild which has always worked to encourage its trade and craft. The exhibition is being organised by the Company in association with the Victoria and Albert Museum, and a distinguished international committee is ensuring that the display will achieve a fair coverage

The theme will be the evolution of 20th century jewellery design. The purpose is to stimulate public interest in jewellery as an art and to encourage British designers in this field. Pieces representing significant stylistic trends are being borrowed from museums, firms and private collections in Western Europe and North and South America, some 20 different countries in all. The display will be designed by Alan Irvine, a leading young architect

Such great masters of the Art Nouveau period as Lalique, Jensen, Tiffany and Fabergé, will be well represented – the location of the earlier exhibits is in itself a big research project. The interval 1918-1939 should provide particularly interesting material because no full historical survey has ever been made of any decorative art of that period

The main emphasis will, however, be on the present day. Jewels by famous artists, among them Dali, Picasso, Calder and Henry Moore, will contrast with the magnificent productions of leading trade workshops. Some outstanding exhibits are being specially commissioned by the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths and the Museum, both from firms and from individual artists, and the new jewels should come as a revelation of the potentialities of this ancient craft

Jewellery exerts a powerful fascination; this is the first full-scale effort to appreciate the jewellers' contribution to the arts of the twentieth century

Goldsmiths' Hall Foster Lane London EC2
December 1960